



**KING'S
CHURCH** (<http://kingschurchedinburgh.org/>)
EDINBURGH

What would Jesus say about right & wrong?

Matthew 22:15-40 describes **three challenges to Jesus' authority** about right and wrong on the Tuesday of the week He was crucified...

Challenge 1: will you pay taxes to Caesar?

A clever political trap from a combination of moral enforcers and Roman collaborators. Jesus sees straight through their hypocrisy and gives a brilliant answer which puts Caesar in his place, and keeps God in His.

Challenge 2: what is real?

The Sadducees' scepticism about eternal life is criticised as "wrong". Quoting from their own preferred area of the Old Testament (*Exodus 3:6*), Jesus proves that they have failed to see the truth. If they read God's Word humbly, and trust God's power beyond their own expectations, they would not have made this mistake.

Challenge 3: what matters most?

The lawyer's test seems to be to prove Jesus' authenticity, rather than to trip Him up (**Mark 12:28-34**). Jesus says that what matters most is loving God with everything we have, and loving our neighbour (summarises Ten Commandments, specifically found in *Deuteronomy 6:5* and *Leviticus 19:18*).

Deciding what's right and wrong is about authority:

1. Acknowledged wisdom, like a manufacturer's instructions.
2. Coercion through power (physical or social).
3. Voluntary, mutual agreement, like rules of a sport or marriage vows

God has this authority: He made us and made everything, He is almighty, and He has offered us a relationship with Him according to the truth.

God alone can define right and wrong but look what He does with His authority: rather than oppress others with it, He dies for their errors!

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”(Proverbs 9:10)

Questions:

- Where have you observed our culture’s perspective(s) about what’s right and what’s wrong?
- What stands out to you from the three challenges Jesus faces in *Matthew 22:15-40*?
- Who do you know who could be identified with the types of challengers asking the questions?
- Who – honestly! – has the authority in your life to define right and wrong?
- What are the challenges of accepting that this role belongs to God?
- How can Christians humbly and confidently show and live what God says to be right?



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